10 BIG IDEAS

that can increase the challenge level for high-achieving students in

Library Media and Technology

CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Rationale

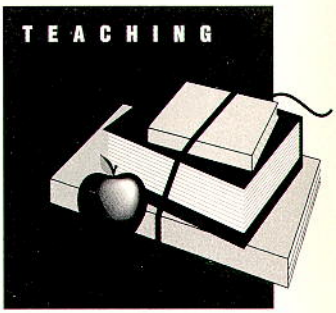
Thousands of gifted and talented young people and adolescents sit in classrooms across the state. Decades of research demonstrate that learning needs of gifted and talented students go beyond what is traditionally provided in regular classrooms. The nature of their abilities and talents, demonstrated or latent, require differentiated learning opportunities to help them realize their potential.

Connecticut educators genuinely care about *all* of their students and seek to meet the incredibly diverse learning needs of the students they face daily. Too often, however, classroom teachers do not have the tools, information or support they need to meet these needs–particularly those of their gifted and talented students.

Connecticut educators genuinely care about all their students and want to meet the needs of the increasingly diverse learners in their classrooms.

Still, the responsibility for increasing the challenge level for gifted and talented students and for providing them with expanded learning opportunities rests largely with the classroom teacher.

This series of brochures is designed to provide classroom teachers, as well as teachers of the gifted and talented, with a number of practical ideas and resources for refining and expanding learning options to better meet these needs. The strategies were selected because they are inexpensive and readily adaptable by teachers. Although the 10 strategies listed here do not replace the powerful services of a full-time enrichment specialist and program for the gifted, we hope that all teachers will use the strategies systematically and that, over time, their use will lead to an increasing array of high-level learning options for gifted and talented students in Connecticut.



Great Links

Blue Web'N
http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn/
This site offers a searchable database of over 1,000 learning sites categorized by subject area, audience and type of resources. It also includes "Filamentality," a tool that enables educators to design web activities for students.

The Gateway to Educational Materials
http://www.thegateway.org/
This site is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and is a special project of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Information and Technology. The purpose of the site is to provide educators with easy access to educational materials, including lesson plans and activities.

Internet School Library Media Center
http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/index.html
This site includes a virtual reference desk and links to many subject-related sites of interest to library media specialists and teachers, and links to sites related to the legal and ethical use of information resources.

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators
http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/
This site is a gateway to extensive links to websites categorized by subject area. The focus of the site is connecting teachers with resources that will be useful in enhancing curriculum and which contribute to their own professional growth.

700+ Great Sites for Kids and the Adults who Care About Them
http://www.ala.org/parentspage/greatsites/amazing.html
This site was developed by the American Library Association (ALA) and is designed to connect students, parents and teachers with high-interest Internet resources. Separate sections for children and adults are organized around subject areas. Also, visit the websites for ALA's divisions concerned with information literacy (http://www.ala.org/aasl/ip_implementation.html) and services to children and young adults (http://www.ala.org/yalsa/).

1. Teach a research process (e.g., The Big6 – http://big6.com/) and accommodate students' interests, learning style preferences and ability levels in related research assignments. Collaborate with the school library media specialist and/or the technology teacher in advance to ensure that the school has, or has access to, the full range of information necessary for all students to complete their projects.

2. Collaborate with colleagues, library media specialists and technology teachers to ensure that all students have an opportunity to learn and apply the skills in the state's Learning Resources and Information Technology framework (http://www.state.ct.us/sde/dtl/curriculum/frlrit.pdf), Connecticut's Computer Technology Standards for Students (http://www.state.ct.us/sde/dsi/technology/studentcompv2vpdf) national information (http://www.ala.org/aasl/ip_nine.html) and technology literacy standards (http://cnets.iste.org/index.html).

3. Use the Internet to connect students with a wide range of print, nonprint and electronic resources that support their individual learning levels, not just chronological or grade levels. For example, iCONN, the Connecticut Digital Library (http://www.iCONN.org) offers online access to Internet-based databases as well as reQuest, the statewide database of Connecticut library collections.

4. Help all students, including the talented and gifted, learn the evaluative criteria necessary for using information from websites. Kathy Schrock's "Critical Evaluation Information" site (http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/eval.html) provides extensive links to articles and checklists to guide teachers and students in assessing the quality of Internet information.

10 B!G IDEAS

5. Early in the school year, discuss with library media specialists and technology teachers the range of learning levels among the students in your class and types of assignments they will be expected to complete over the course of the year. Consider varied presentation options and products for major assignments to encourage student creativity (e.g., videotape, Power Point, multimedia presentation).

6. Brainstorm with library media specialists and technology teachers to develop essential real-world research questions for student assignments and guide student investigations. For example, explore ways to incorporate the use of primary source documents such as those contained in the American Memory Collection (http://memory.loc.gov/) in the Library of Congress. Ask the library media specialist or technology teacher to provide instruction about the features and uses of more advanced resource materials.

7. Work in collaboration with library media specialists to implement a variety of reading motivation and discussion programs. These might be well-established programs, such as Junior Great Books/Great Books (http://www.greatbooks.org) and the Nutmeg Children's Book Award (http://www.biblio.org/nutmegaward/), or book discussion opportunities created for your school. When appropriate, match students' materials to their reading levels and interests. BookLinks, a CD-ROM product from Touchstone Applied Science Associates is an example of a program that categorizes thousands of book titles by Degrees of Reading Power level, genre and topic (www.tasaliteracy.com).

8. Work with the technology teacher and library media specialist to create a directory of Internet-based programs and facilitate student participation with scientists and adventurers in real-life exploration and research (e.g., the JASON Project http://www.ctjason.org, the Quest Channel http://quest.classroom.com or the Global Schoolhouse http://www.gsn.org/). Integrate these on-line projects with the curriculum, when appropriate, or offer after-school opportunities.

9. Promote ongoing collaboration with public librarians, especially those with major responsibilities related to children and young adults. Encourage parents to take advantage of special programs, such as author visits, book talks and discussions, offered by the public library. Encourage students to participate in summer reading programs.

10. Invite students, particularly those who have mastered the basic information and technology skills and competencies, to volunteer their time to work with other students (and staff) who may need assistance in the library media or technology center. Students who exhibit special talent in using technology often can use their skills to help create or maintain a school's web page. Information on "Designing Web Sites that Deliver" can be found at http://www.fno.org/webdesign.html.